

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend Claims 1, 8, 10 and 19 as follows.

1. (Currently Amended) A human eye detection method comprising the following steps:

- a) inputting an image;
- b) analyzing the image and getting a candidate eye area;
- c) determining a region based on the candidate eye area, said region being a region encompassing the candidate eye area and the center of said region being the center of the candidate eye area;
- d) calculating the region's size, which is recorded as S;
- e) detecting dark areas in the region and counting the number of dark areas, which number is recorded as N; and
- f) determining whether or not the candidate eye area is a real eye area by comparing the ratio N/S to a predetermined first threshold, wherein if the ratio N/S is smaller than said first threshold, the candidate eye area is judged determined to be a real eye area; else, the candidate eye area is judged determined to be a false eye area.

2. (Previously Presented) The human eye detection method according to claim 1, characterized in that the method further comprises the step of:

determining candidate face areas on the basis of said judged candidate eye area obtained from said step f).

3-4. (Canceled)

5. (Previously Presented) The human eye detection method according to claim 1 or 2, characterized in that, step e), executes a binarization processing for detecting the dark areas.

6-7. (Canceled)

8. (Currently Amended) The human eye detection method according to claim 1 or 2, further comprising a threshold calculating step before the step f), for calculating said ~~first~~ threshold.

9. (Canceled)

10. (Currently Amended) A human eye detection apparatus comprising:
an input unit that inputs an image; and
a processor that (i) analyzes the image to obtain a candidate eye area; (ii) determines a ~~neighborhood~~ region ~~in the image of~~ based on the candidate eye area, the region based on the candidate eye area being a region encompassing the candidate eye area and the center of said region being the center of the candidate eye area, (iii) calculates the region's size S, (iv) detects dark areas in the region and determines the total count N of dark areas in the neighborhood region, (v) and determines whether or not the candidate eye area is a real eye area by comparing ~~compares~~ the ratio N/S to a predetermined ~~first~~ threshold, wherein if the ratio N/S is smaller than the ~~first~~ threshold, the candidate eye area is ~~judged~~ determined to be a real eye area, else the candidate eye area is ~~judged~~ determined to be a false eye area .

11. (Previously Presented) A human eye detection apparatus according to Claim 10, wherein said processor executes a binarization processing to detect the dark areas.

12-18. (Canceled)

19. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable storage medium embodying program codes for causing an apparatus to perform a human eye detection method comprising:

- inputting an image;
- analyzing the image and getting a candidate eye area;
- determining a region based on the candidate eye area, the region being a region encompassing the candidate eye area and the center of said region being the center of the candidate eye area;
- calculating the region's size, which is recorded as S;
- detecting dark areas in the region and counting the number of dark areas, which number is recorded as N; and

determining whether or not the candidate eye area is a real eye area by comparing the ratio N/S to a predetermined first threshold, wherein if the ~~ratio~~ratio N/S is smaller than the first threshold, the candidate eye area is ~~judged~~determined to be a real eye area, else ~~he~~the candidate eye area is ~~judged~~determined to be a false eye area.

20. (Canceled)